



June 2003

PROVIDING MORE HOUSING FOR WORKING FAMILIES IN EVERY NEIGHBORHOOD

INCLUSIONARY HOUSING POLICY PASSES COUNCIL IN EFFORT TO ADDRESS HOUSING CRISIS

Nine months after declaring the nation's first Housing State of Emergency, the San Diego City Council approved the city's first-ever inclusionary housing policy by a 6-2 vote on May 20th. For almost two years, housing activists and I have been fighting for a variety of policies and initiatives to help address the city's ever-growing affordable housing crisis. This Council action is truly a big victory for working families citywide.

Inclusionary housing is about providing housing for working families—teachers, police officers and low- and middle-income families struggling to break into our housing market. What this provides is affordable housing in every neighborhood—not just our older, urban communities. This plan will put jobs where people live, and put housing where people work. That is the only way to solve our jobs/housing imbalance.

The inclusionary housing plan requires developers to build 10 percent of their dwellings as affordable. If these units are to be rentals, they would need to be affordable for a family of four earning less than \$39,051 a year. If they are to be “for sale” units, they would need to be priced for a family of four earning up to \$60,100. If the builder opts to pay an “in lieu” fee rather than build the affordable units,

they will be forced to pay a fee that, over the next three years, will ultimately rise to \$2.50 a square foot.

There is no question in anyone's mind that we are still in the midst of a housing crisis. Middle income families cannot afford to buy a home in the city of San Diego. Lower- and middle-income families are doubling up to pay the rent or mortgage. And families are moving to Temecula and commuting to jobs in San Diego in order to find affordable housing. This isn't acceptable for a world-class city like San Diego.

An inclusionary policy seeks to place a requirement on developers to build housing not just at the highest-end, luxury-housing portion of the market, but to balance that more-profitable segment of the market with the public need for truly affordable housing in our city overall. This is a solid and sound housing policy for our city. In fact, inclusionary housing policies are in place and working in 11 of 18 cities in San Diego County and over 100 communities statewide.

There are other solutions that I have championed in response to the housing crisis. On the same day that we passed Inclusionary Housing, the City Council also approved an Affordable/Infill Housing Expedite program that will cut the permit processing times for affordable housing in half. We also approved a revised fee schedule for the Development Services (building permit) Department. This new fee schedule, combined with a comprehensive review of the department, should result in more efficient processing of building applications.

How To Contact Us

Councilmember Toni Atkins
202 C Street, MS #10A
San Diego, CA 92101
Telephone: (619) 236-6633
Fax: (619) 595-1481
Email: ToniAtkins@sandiego.gov
TTY: (619) 533-6586

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COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PROJECT TO PRIORITIZE SIDEWALK, GUTTER, DRAIN REPAIRS

DISTRICT THREE FUNDS SIDEWALK ENGINEERING STUDY

One of my top priorities is to repair and improve the aging infrastructure in our neighborhoods, and I'm always looking for new ways to fix as many streets and sidewalks as possible in a given year. That's why I was happy to help fund a community-driven project that will help us identify and prioritize sidewalk improvement projects in three of our older District Three communities.

Last year I was approached by Sandy Johnson, Ellen Smart and George Billingsley, community members concerned with the number of residential sidewalks and gutters in need of repair throughout parts of the district. They requested assistance with a project designed to classify and prioritize the infrastructure deficiencies in these communities. After better defining the scope of the project, we decided to seek out funds for a District Three Sidewalk Engineering Study in three neighborhoods—Normal Heights, North Park and South Park—which are among the oldest in the city.

I'm pleased to report that we've been able to come up with the necessary funds to support this \$226,000 project. By combining \$100,000 in District Three Community Development Block Grant funds with \$126,000 from the city's Streets Division, the project will provide for the preparation of a deficiency study to identify sub-standard sidewalk, gutter, pavement and drainage areas.

The results of the study will allow us to develop a prioritized list of improvement projects which will guide us on a yearly basis to help address these deficiencies.

So thanks and congratulations to Sandy, Ellen and George for a job well done! I'm always willing to try and help out with community-driven projects that seek to improve our neighborhoods.



The study will help prioritize infrastructure projects, such as sidewalk repair, in our neighborhoods.

METRO CENTER CONSTRUCTION SITE 'TOPS OUT'

On Friday, May 23rd, a topping out celebration was held at the Metro Center construction site at I-15 and University Avenue. The celebration marked the placement of the last pieces of steel framing on the four-story, 80,000 square foot office building.



Councilmember Atkins expressed her thanks to the construction workers at the Metro Center topping out celebration.

When completed in March of 2004, the Metro Center will serve as the home of the Workforce Partnership Metro Career Center. The center will provide job training and referral services for residents of the entire city.

The project is one of my top priorities, and I've been pleased to be able to help guide this effort as a member of the Workforce Partnership board to bring the new center to City Heights.



Councilmember Atkins signs the last piece of steel framing before it is hoisted to the top of the new Metro Career Center building.

At its present location in Kearny Mesa, the Career Center is not very accessible to the residents it serves. Moving it into the new Metro Center will bring a world of opportunities to residents of Mid-City.

The building will share a 484-space parking structure with the Metro Villas housing project, a 120-unit affordable family community to be built immediately behind the Metro Center by the City Heights CDC and Interfaith Housing of San Diego. The project is a joint venture by Price Entities and Urban West Developers.

The Metro Center will also include a Head Start childcare program for Mid-City working families.

Councilmember Toni Atkins and Julian Quinonez, a City Heights resident and Teen Program Coordinator for Price Charities, on the third floor of the Metro Center building.



BUDGET UPDATE: ATKINS SEEKS TO PROTECT PARK AND REC BUDGET

During the May 19 budget hearing, the City Council unanimously rejected the City Manager's proposed cuts to the Park and Recreation Department. The proposed budget includes over \$4 million in cuts to direct services provided by the city at our park and recreation facilities. Among these proposed cuts were the closure of all city swimming pools from November through mid-March, the elimination of the work crew that cleans restrooms and picks up litter during peak visitor hours at our beaches and Mission Bay, reduced hours at all recreation centers, and reduced hours at the Balboa Park Activity Center and Municipal Gymnasium.

I find these proposed cuts to be unacceptable, and along with my council colleagues, directed the City Manager to return with options that will allow us to avoid this reduction in services. I feel that the Park and Recreation Department has proven to be one of the most efficiently operated departments in this city, providing vital services to nearly every San Diego resident. These services are a direct quality of life issue, and I will continue to make every effort to see that they are restored in the final budget.

CITY HEIGHTS MINI-PARK REOPENS AFTER \$120,000 PLAYGROUND UPGRADE

I'm pleased to report that City Heights Mini Park, located at 3033 39th Street, reopened on May 16th. First developed in 1972, the \$120,000 playground upgrade, which was initiated in late 2001, was funded in part by a generous \$25,000 donation from the San Diego Foundation. The balance of funding was achieved through Mid-City Special Park Fees (\$90k) and Park and Recreation Community Matching Funds (\$5k).

The playground is now accessible to children with disabilities and includes all new play equipment: two spring toys, a three-bay swing set and a multi-integrated play piece with three slides.



The new, multi-integrated play equipment at City Heights Mini Park at 3033 39th Street.

DISTRICT THREE BUSINESSES, SITES AND EVENTS NAMED 'BEST' IN SAN DIEGO MAGAZINE

COUNCIL DISTRICT THREE NAMED 'BEST POLITICIAN'S WEB SITE'

I was honored to read in the June issue of *San Diego Magazine* that our very own District Three website was named "Best Politician's Web Site" as part of their annual "The Best and Worst of San Diego" feature. The magazine had this to say about our site:

"It's not cookie cutter like those of other San Diego City Council members. District 3 constituents ... don't have to be bored by dull grids and same-as-the-next graphics when doing on-line research on their council rep. Whee! It's almost as much fun as e-Bay, and less confusing than Amazon.com. Go to <http://genesis.sannet.gov/infospc/templates/cd3/index.jsp>."

Other District Three honorees recognized by critics are: Normal Heights as "Best Street Fair Venue," for its annual Roots Festival and Adams Avenue Street Fair; Landmark's Hillcrest Cinemas in Village Hillcrest at 5th and University for "Best Movie Concessions Stand"; Live Wire in North Park at 2103 El Cajon Boulevard as "Best Place To Drink With Your Dog"; Kensington Video at 4067 Adams Avenue as "Best Video Store"; nail artist Andii Gutsch at Salon Belle Jour at 939 University Avenue in Hillcrest as "Best Manicure and Pedicure"; and J.A. Cooley Museum at 4233 Park Boulevard in University Heights as "Best Museum You Don't Know About" for their collection of rebuilt cars from 1886 to 1993.

Also named are Balboa Park's carousel as "Best Merry-Go-Round"; North Park Car Wash at 3401 University Avenue as "Best Cheap Car Wash"; Balboa Park's famous Moreton Bay fig tree, just north of the Natural History Museum, as "Best Tree"; and ACE Hardware at 1007 University Avenue in Hillcrest as "Best Neighborhood Hardware Store."

And in the special readers poll, Balboa Park was named "Prettiest Part of Town," edging out La Jolla.

Congratulations to all the District Three honorees!

FREE SUMMER CONCERTS RETURN TO BIRD PARK IN NORTH PARK

The North Park Community Association will once again host its popular "Concerts at Bird Park" summer concert series which debuted last year. Free and open to the public, the concerts take place on the grass at Bird Park, located at the corner of Upas Street, Pershing Drive and 28th Street.

The concerts are held on select Saturdays throughout the summer, from 6:00 to 8:00pm. Each of the concerts, which costs approximately \$3,000 to produce, is made possible by the generous donations of local businesses and residents.

The lineup for this year's "Concerts at Bird Park" is:

July 5: *Bill Caballero & The Bi-National Mambo Orchestra*

July 19: *Theo & The Zydeco Patrol*

August 2: *Sue Palmer and The Motel Swing Band*

August 16: *Jonny Viau and The Blues All-Stars*

August 30: *Millenium Rock & Roll Band*

For more information , or to make a donation, call 619/392-4130, or email BirdParkConcert@aol.com.

'SUMMER IN THE PARK' CONCERTS TO FILL THE AIR AT TROLLEY BARN PARK

The University Heights Community Development Corporation, in partnership with the San Diego Park and Recreation Department, will once again host a summer of fun and free entertainment with their successful "Summer In The Park" concert series at Trolley Barn Park. Folks are invited to bring a picnic dinner or sample the tasty eats of vendors in park, which is located on the north side of Adams Avenue at Florida Street.

The concerts are held every Friday evening from 6:00 to 8:00pm, from July 11th through August 29th. The concerts are co-sponsored by local businesses and residents, with the primary co-sponsors being Bourbon Street, California Key Realty and San Diego's Mortgage Today, Mary Ann Stevens, the University Heights Community Association, and Twiggs Tea & Coffee.

Performing at this year's "Summer in the Park" are:

July 11: Silverado Bluegrass Band

July 18: Tami Thomas (Big Band, Swing & Jive)

July 25: The Boogiemmen (Blues/Funk/Swing)

August 1: Celtic Ensemble (Traditional Celtic music)

August 8: Bayou Brothers (Zydeco/Cajon/Mardi Gras)

August 15: Gatos Papacitos (Spanish/Flamenco)

August 22: Sue Palmer (Boogie Woogie and Swing)

August 29: The Mar Dels ('50s, '60s & '70s music)

No alcoholic beverages or glass containers are permitted. For more info, or to make a donation, call 619/297-3166.

UPCOMING DISTRICT THREE STREET FAIRS, PARADES AND FESTIVALS

City Heights International Village Celebration

*(presented by the City Heights Community
Development Corporation)*

Saturday, June 7, 10:00am to 5:00pm

University Avenue from Fairmount Ave. to Menlo Ave.

Contact: 619/584-1535

Golden Hill Street Festival

*(presented by the Golden Hill Community
Development Corporation)*

Saturday, June 14, 11:00am to 6:00pm

In Golden Hill at 25th Street and C Street

Contact: 619/236-5202

Old House Fair

*(presented by Save Our Heritage Organization
SOHO)*

Saturday, June 21, 10:00am to 4:00pm

In South Park at 30th Street and Beech Street

Contact: 619/297-9327

San Diego Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Pride Rally, Parade and Festival

Rally: Friday, July 25, 7:30 to 10:30pm

Organ Pavilion, Balboa Park

Parade: Saturday, July 26, from 11am to 3pm

In Hillcrest on University Avenue between Normal Street and Sixth Avenue, then south on Sixth to Balboa Drive

Festival: Saturday and Sunday, July 26-27

Sat.: Noon to 10:00pm, Sun.: 11:00am to 8:00pm

At Marston Point in Balboa Park

Contact: 619/297-7683

CityFest

(presented by the Hillcrest Association)

Sunday, August 10, from 10am to 7:00pm

In Hillcrest, on Fifth Avenue between University Avenue and Upas Street.

Contact: 619/299-3330